



# Division of Capitol Police News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Capitol Police probe leads to felony arrest in threat to House speaker

**RICHMOND** – Virginia Capitol Police announced Thursday night the arrest of a man on a felony charge of threatening the speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates.

Stephen J. Hartzell, 23, faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted on a charge of threatening to burn or bomb, a Class 5 felony. A Richmond magistrate issued an arrest warrant Thursday morning for Hartzell, who was taken into custody Thursday afternoon by Norfolk police.

Hartzell, a native of Fairfax County who most recently listed several addresses in Norfolk, was ordered held without bond following his arrest. He is scheduled to appear at a hearing Friday in Norfolk General District Court.

“I’d like to commend our investigators for their fast and diligent response to this matter,” said Col. Anthony S. Pike, the Capitol Police chief. “Our government was founded on a principle of citizen participation. Violence or the threat of it, whether aimed at those who legislate or their staff members, is not a part of that equation and it will not be tolerated under any circumstances.”

The investigation and Hartzell's arrest grew out of a post that Capitol Police investigators said he made on House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn's Facebook page on Feb. 12. The speaker promptly reported the matter to Capitol Police.

The post has been removed, but the investigation is continuing.

"I cannot emphasize strongly enough how seriously we take threats such as these," Pike said. "The members of our General Assembly must be able to go about their legislative duties knowing they are free from fear of intimidation aimed at preventing them from conducting the business of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

Eds: Capitol Police do not have a copy of Hartzell's booking photo but suggest you contact Norfolk police.

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